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ABSTRACT

This publication is designed to provide trustees with a mechanism for discussing their roles and responsibilities as community and junior college trustees. This volume is a continuation of dialogue begun by board members interested in providing guidelines and directions for more effective communication among their peers. This second volume of trustee papers includes the following: "The Environment of a Community College Trustee" by Robert J. Rimington; "So Now You Are a Trustee!" by Sedley Stuart; "Role and Responsibility: Another View" by Jeanne Goddard; "Education of the Trustee" by Catherine R. Perkins; "Liaison with the Community: A Responsibility of the Trustee" by Lilla E. Engdahl; "Local Government and the Board; The Holding Experience" by L. E. Pucher; and "Where the Twain Meets" by Nadine Judith Haas. (Author/SW)

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2 TRUSTEE PAPERS

Prepared by and for Community and Junior College Board Members

Editorial Director: Richard E. Wilson
Editor: William A. Harper

Published by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges with support from the Danforth Foundation and cooperation of the Association of Community College Trustees

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Contents

5 **INTRODUCTION**
Richard E. Wilson

7 **THE ENVIRONMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEE**
Robert J. Rimington

15 **SO NOW YOU ARE A TRUSTEE!**
Sedley Stuart

21 **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY: ANOTHER VIEW**
Jeanne Goddard

25 **EDUCATION OF THE TRUSTEE**
Catherine R. Perkins

33 **LIAISON WITH THE COMMUNITY: A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRUSTEE**
Lilla E. Engdahl

37 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE BOARD: THE HOLDING EXPERIENCE**
L. E. Pucher

43 **WHERE THE TWAIN MEETS**
Nadine Judith Haas

47 **THE CONTRIBUTORS**

Richard E. Wilson

INTRODUCTION

The community college is, as its name implies, a community resource. It is in and of the community. It is accountable for its performance and its service to all those people and other institutions which make up the community.

It is no wonder, then, that the role of the boards of trustees of community colleges is of vital importance to the growth and development of the institutions. The men and women who serve on the boards, whether elected or appointed, represent and provide the linkage with the citizens whose support and understanding are so necessary in this educational enterprise.

Therefore, there is continuing concern on the part of the trustees themselves, as well as planners and other citizens, about the responsibilities, the processes, the scope of the trustee's job. How does she or he relate to the community? Are there any special qualifications for trusteeships? Does the board play a part in management?

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, in cooperation with the Association of Community College Trustees, is pleased to provide a mechanism for discussion of roles and responsibilities of trustees by trustees themselves. *Trustee Papers 2* is a continuation of dialogue begun some months ago by board members interested in providing guidelines and directions for more effective communication among their peers. Presentations in this second volume, like those in *Trustee Papers 1*, were prepared by a group of board members, working with AACJC and ACCT.

This volume also contains a presentation obtained from student Nadine Judith Haas of Harford Junior College, Bel Air, Maryland. She is a member of the Maryland State Board for Community Colleges.

Both volumes of trustee papers were supported by the Danforth Foun-

dation. Other means will be found to illuminate issues in trusteeship in the future.

RICHARD E. WILSON
Vice President for Programs
American Association of
Community and Junior Colleges

Robert J. Rimington

THE ENVIRONMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEE

America, since its beginning, has relied on men and women of good will and high principles to volunteer themselves, their time and energy, in the interest of building a better society. In every community, small or large, rural or urban, they are to be found in school work, in church activities, in civic betterment programs. They serve on committees and boards, in campaigns and drives.

Today, community colleges across the country look to such citizens for leadership and direction. Boards of trustees provide the mechanism for participation. As community-based institutions, the colleges recognize the vital need for involvement of citizens in planning and development. There are few ground rules or criteria for trusteeship—but some ideals for such involvement can be advanced. It is possible to hazard some answers to the question, "What is a good trustee?"

A good trustee is an able person of unquestionable personal integrity. He or she has courage and sound principles of personal ethics. He or she advances and supports the philosophies, goals, and objectives of the institution regardless of conflicts of personal interest.

A good trustee has a background that permits rapid acquisition of a grasp of the problems and opportunities of the college in their true perspective. He understands the administrative process and distinguishes between the policy-making functions of a lay board and the professional responsibilities of the president, staff, and faculty. He or she has wide experience, broad knowledge, and full understanding of people and affairs. He or she recognizes the presence of the power structure in the community and relates to it—but is independent in questions and judgments. Such a trustee is available for meetings and consultations, is deeply interested in the success of the institution, and is loyal to it.

A good trustee has a broad social point of view and an awareness of current changes in the world.

Previously, we have talked about the ideal. It would be rare, indeed, for all those seeking to serve to fit the mold. But these are goals that should be kept in mind.

Now, let's look at these matters in more detail. For example, what about conflict of interest? In order to avoid it the board member must give careful consideration to any action that would cause an advantage to occur to him, his family, or the firm or agencies with which he is associated. This advantage could be in the placing of a contract, employment of a close relative, or the acceptance of favors. Gratuitous offerings should be refused, regardless of the source, to avoid the effect of influence. Trustees should feel free to attend and to be welcome at college events. Therefore, acceptance of tickets to college drama productions and athletic events is not considered a violation of ethics. However, the acceptance of an offer from the automotive technology division to tune up the family car would suggest a conflict.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

At the outset of his candidacy for board membership, the citizen should announce plans to divest himself of any areas where a conflict of interest could result. Any person who is owner, officer, employee, or director of a bank, business, or newspaper which does any business with the college could be considered in violation of the code of ethics to which every good trustee should subscribe. Such a violation would also apply in a situation involving the trustee's spouse.

Even if an item or service is to be bid on rigid specifications or the fair market price is to be paid, the trustee cannot be a party to the sale. In the unusual event that a trustee is the only vendor (such as owner of needed land), he should not participate in the decision or discussion regarding the item. In such a case, a complete report of the circumstances should be made available to the public. Connections with organizations which are known to have views contrary to the goals, objectives, and philosophies of the college should be severed in order that independent and unbiased decisions can be rendered. A trustee should not, as a representative of the college, endorse a product or a person running for office or make a statement about a building or service. If he identifies himself as such, it can be inferred that his is the official position of the college

board, thus injecting the college into the situation. He can take this position in his own right but cannot presume to speak for the college unless the board has authorized such a course of action. The board's written policy should not permit it to make such endorsements.

The national government and many states have been considering the problem of a "Code of Ethics" for many years. Where executive orders prevail; i.e., within the institution, it is possible to effectively deal with the problem, and, as a result, much has been accomplished in the reduction of bribery, graft, and embezzlement. Every college policy manual should contain provisions dealing with these types of situations.

In the legislative arena, the situation is much different. This is an area of which trustees are a part. Legislation dealing with conflict of interest has been passed by many states. Interpretations of these acts by courts, attorney generals, and states attorneys, or the failure to have interpretations, have resulted in many qualified persons becoming so concerned that they either resign from public boards or offices or will not offer themselves candidates for public offices. Public officials in Illinois were concerned when the atorney general gave an opinion to the Winnebago County Board, Rockford, Illinois, that a county board member was in conflict of interest if he, his spouse, or minor children had stock in, or if he or his spouse was an officer, director, or employee of a bank which had been designated a depository for county funds. In contrast, school officials were relieved when Illinois Circuit Judge E. Harold Wineland ruled that a member of the Effingham, Illinois, School Board was not in conflict of interest, although he was an officer and an employee of the Effingham State Bank, designated a depository for school funds by the school board.

Since neither of these cases has been tested in a higher court, they will be considered the best information available at this time on the subject. To the layman they appear contradictory. To the student of law it appears that the opinions have been determined from different points of view.

The judge's interpretation of the Effingham case removes the cause of concern mentioned earlier and allows a wide range of capable persons with prior decision-making experience to offer their services on public boards and commissions. It is hoped that this opinion prevails.

PASSING OF NEW LAWS

The passage of open meeting laws (laws requiring all decisions to be made in sessions open to the public) and financial disclosure legislation in many states is making a major impact on how public officials see their role in decision-making. These measures were prompted by scandals in local government and foot dragging in state legislatures. They have caused an outcry by officials, many of whom have threatened to withdraw their membership on elected boards or not run for reelection. After initial reaction and careful study, many objectors find that they can "live" with the laws and admit that there is value in them.

BOARDS AND THE PRESS

Many persons not experienced in making decisions in public are uncomfortable when representatives of the media are present. They feel that they are required to make decisions under unfair conditions, that they exist in a "fish bowl." There is now doubt that the fear of being quoted or misquoted inhibits the expression of some, and there are times when it should if it (1) infringes on the dignity of man, (2) if it would be profane or vulgar, (3) if it would be libelous or slanderous. To be pitied are those who are afraid because they haven't kept abreast of developments, are awed by the magnitude of a situation, fear to stand up and be counted, or can't make up their minds because they know they will have to answer to their peer group.

Those who keep silent because they feel they are not articulate enough are missing an opportunity to properly represent their supporters. They can gain the confidence, respect, and admiration of their fellow board members and the public by stating their views even though their stands do not enjoy popular support. The word "don't quote me," or "this is not for the record," or similar phrases have no reason to be uttered in a public board meeting if the members review the information on the subject, listen to the discussion, ask questions, and consider the recommendation. Board members, in time, learn that the reporter can be of tremendous assistance in relaying the needs of the board of the members of the district.

It is a good journalist who knows how to report a situation in its

proper context. It is a wise board member who cultivates the acquaintance of the reporter and expresses himself clearly in conveying his goals, principles, and moral standards. When the trustee's goals and aspirations for the college are understood by the reporter, the danger of being misquoted or being quoted out of context is greatly reduced. It is helpful for the reporter to know the board member's background and to understand the subject being discussed. There is a saying in legal circles that "hard cases make poor laws." This axiom can apply to college boards when they must decide difficult issues. When this condition develops it is best to remember that the longer a decision is postponed, the harder it is to make.

DECISIONS AND BOARDS

Boards are usually involved in three types of decisions: (1) when buying is to be done, (2) when new policies and practices are sought, or (3) when dealing with groups inside and outside the institution.

It must be realized that decision-making is the process by which one choice is selected from among those that are available. Decision-making is something done with minds. The institution which has its sights set on the most successful operation looks for every opportunity to make better choices.

The process begins when the members of the board find something they think is worth trying to change. If they are satisfied with situations as they are, or if they are dissatisfied and say there is no use in trying to change them, it is obvious they are in no mood to look for other choices. But when they see a new possibility, they are ready to begin the decision-making process.

The first step is to get the idea clearly in mind, view it from all sides, and identify the problem to be solved. Next, the board must get the facts and analyze them. Usually it is necessary to break the problem down into its component parts, studying them carefully. If necessary, advice should be sought from competent professional consultants. Alternative solutions should be sought, and decisions should be made on what appears to be worthwhile and will attain the goals sought. The management team should then be allowed to take over.

PERSONALITY OF THE BOARD

Decisions of a person will reflect the individual's background, training, and experience. A person's self-image can be predicted when he or she is introduced to new surroundings. If personal goals coincide with the goals of the group, the individual's adjustments to the board will be comfortable.

After the board has been constituted for a time and has worked together, made decisions, formulated policies and procedures, it begins to develop a personality. Its behavioral pattern can be predicted — the same as that of an individual. As it matures, a board feels comfortable in its decision-making role. In time, a board may become too mature. If a board begins to use the phrase, "we've always done it this way," it is a sign that it may have matured beyond the point of being progressive. The attitude of the board should be open-minded, experimental, and explorative if it is to provide effective leadership for the comprehensive community college.

"Who runs the college — the trustees or the president?" is a question frequently asked. The trustees hire a president, who is a professional, and then delegate authority and make the administration responsible to them for the operation of the college in accord with the policies they have adopted. It is the president's responsibility to develop the operating procedures to carry out these policies. Policies should be written in broad enough terms to permit the president to interpret the application of them to meet any situation as it develops. His job description should also be written in general terms so that he has confidence that he can carry out the policies laid down in relation to the functions, philosophies, and goals of the institution.

The president must maintain contact with the board by making progress reports and recommendations at regular intervals. Therefore, the board should act on a recommendation from the president when it makes a decision regarding the operation of the college. When this procedure is followed, the naive observer sometimes gets the impression that the chief administrator is telling the board how to vote. This is not the case. They can accept, modify, or reject the recommendation. The minutes of the meeting will report the position taken by the board and the president, and proper accountability can be assessed. This also

assumes that each board member recognizes his responsibility to vote on the recommendation. The board and president should develop feelings of mutual trust and respect. Both must continually work to maintain this spirit. Should a suspicion develop which creates a question in the minds of either about a loss of this trust and respect, it is incumbent for the decision-making process referred to earlier to be set in motion.

TIME AND MOTION

When trustees or presidents assemble, the length of board meetings is a subject that is likely to be discussed. Both parties contribute to the time required in conducting the board's business. Timely communication between board members and the president is necessary to get subjects on the agenda and adequate information about them prior to the board meeting. If information is not furnished in readily-understood reports, or if the reports are not reviewed by the members before the meeting, time will be required to clear up questions.

Some boards function with standing committees using staff personnel for resource purposes. Others have the staff report to the president and, he in turn, to the board. There is a danger of the standing committee system developing an autonomy and a condition of "senatorial courtesy" resulting among committees. Ad hoc committees for special assignments can be safely and effectively employed to use the expertise of board members in their areas of competence.

The board chairman can exert considerable influence on the time required at a board meeting. He knows that trustees come in a variety of classifications. The members differ in personality, knowledge, capability, stature, motivation, and ability to express themselves. He knows he must keep the discussions on the subject, limit the grandstander, control the talker and initiator, encourage the timid and inarticulate, satisfy the opinion holder, and guide to a compromise when such need is indicated. He should be thoroughly familiar with the agenda, the reports, and the recommendations. This may require a pre-meeting conference with the president. He should start the meeting on time, keep it moving by calling for action to dispose of recommendations as soon as adequate discussion has been allowed, insist that administrative details be kept to a minimum, and if visitors have been recognized, advise them

of the time allowed for their presentations. (The board policy should contain a requirement that prior approval for permission to address the board be secured in advance of the meeting to give the staff time to secure information to answer questions that are to be raised.)

The board should support the chairman and not allow the meeting to become an arena of debate between visitors and the trustees. The chairman must have the prerogative to recognize and to authorize those who should speak and those who should answer. The board chairman and the president should be the official spokesmen for the college.

The chairman and the president have a responsibility at the end of meetings to announce items that can be expected at the next session. Members have a responsibility to voice their concerns so that answers can be researched and included in the reports prepared for the next meeting.

It is appropriate that an effort be made to disseminate promptly the decisions made at board meetings to the public through the media serving the district, as well as an inter-institutional memo for the benefit of employees.

With this discussion of the environment of the college trustee, it is apparent that he or she should have a broad social background, experience, knowledge, courage, principles of ethics, and that he or she should support the philosophies, goals, and objectives of the college. To this must be added the dimension of an understanding employer and a tolerant spouse who will permit the time and thought necessary for the guiding of a comprehensive community college.

Sedley Stuart

SO NOW YOU ARE A TRUSTEE!

It is the day after the local school district elections. *You* have been elected to the school board. Henceforth you will attend regular meetings to ponder the fate of the several hundred souls who frequent your school buildings daily. You will question budgets. You will become familiar with education and all its problems. You will spend long hours listening to reports, reading reports, and preparing reports. In short, you are expected to become "involved."

Why did you do it? Why did you run for the school board?

During the 15 years I have served on school boards, such a query has been posed many times. The questioners vary. Sometimes it has been myself, at other times my wife, friends, or business associates. Even newspaper reporters have asked and waited for an answer. It is a difficult question. I will try to respond in the ensuing paragraphs.

First, let me explain the term "board member." In Oregon we say just that—"school board member" or "college board member." But in other parts of the country the term "trustee" is in fashion. In the interest of clarity, I will use the word "trustee" for the purpose of this report.

Why should anyone wish to serve as a trustee? It seems to me that those who have played the role of trustee in our country's hundreds of institutions of learning during the past 200 years have played a very important role indeed. How many do we know by name? Few, for a trustee is less known by more of the American public than any other political entity.

NON-PAID, NON-POLITICAL

Notoriety, then, is not a consideration for the office of trustee. True, there are those who use this office as a political stepping stone, and they may shine brightly for a time, but they may also fade very fast.

Through the years I have found that very few people in my area, or in my neighborhood, know that I am a trustee at Mt. Hood Community College, a six-year-old institution. Nor do they know that I served as a board member for a number of years at local elementary and high schools. Therefore, if there is any ego involved in this sort of thing, it must be a very direct one. I think of myself as a non-paid, non-political type politician.

Should a trustee flaunt his altrusism and his idealism, beat his breast, and declare he is "serving his community?" Today that would be to relegate such service to the role of a crutch. No, I would prefer to think that trustees enjoy the job, consider it important enough to merit a great share of their time, and feel they are gaining a certain expertise *which is worth sharing.*

And what does that bring us to? It brings us to involvement, commitment, and opportunity to work with youth and, consequently, the future of the country.

Picture the new trustee's first board meeting. Perhaps he knows his fellow board members only by name; he has never been in the board room before; he knows only a few administrators; he knows even less about the institution, its policies, goals, or problems. There is much he has to learn, and he can't take a year to do it. There are no courses that he can take to prepare himself; there is no school he can attend. His learning must come only from being at board meetings, delving into all the material he can lay his hands on—becoming, once again that same word, involved.

This job of trustee is really not unlike any other political job. When the elected representative goes to the U. S. Congress or to his own state legislature, he knows little about the commitment of that position until he gets there, until he is involved in it. It is interesting to note that the really great political leaders are those who have done a great deal to prepare themselves, the types of individuals who become committed to the task at hand. A trustee is no different, and he shouldn't consider himself different simply because he is in a position which is usually non-political and particularly non-remunerative.

PREPARATION IMPORTANT

The first lesson the new trustee must learn as he settles into the job before him is that there is fine line between administration and board involvement. Some board members feel that "involvement" means involvement with administration. Sometimes frustrated business people, who have not had the opportunity in their own businesses for decision-making, confuse trustee involvement with administrative decision-making. All advice on the role of a trustee stresses that the trustee not be an administrator. This is extremely important. Involvement, then, has nothing to do with administration.

It is perhaps elementary to say that the trustee's responsibilities are to employ administrators, make certain that policies are set, and insure that administration in turn carries out the policies. The trustee in some states is actually an arm of the state government, yet his primary function is not that of law-making, but rather that of policy-making, conforming to the laws of the state. Within this function there is, in some circumstances, much latitude, and, in other instances, very little. The trustee plays the role of a corporate board member, sitting in judgment, helping to guide the administration toward the right goals for the benefit of students and community.

I have no illusions about the fact that policy is, to a great extent, initiated by administrators who bring various recommendations to the board. If it is a good board, they will weigh these recommendations, delving into the reasons behind them, and then make their final judgments.

UNDERSTANDING THE POSITION

This is how the new board member learns, how all board members increase their expertise. A weak trustee is one who does not understand his position with regard to administration.

Let it be clearly understood that the administration is the "number one." It is the executive branch. When students, classified staff, or faculty speak to the board directly, it is always done with the administration present, preferably in an open board meeting. Executive board meetings are not of particular value, except in instances relating to personnel matters or land purchase, perhaps a few others.

At our institution we have a tradition that was begun when the college was founded. Our first president encouraged initiation of a policy that board members should be informed.

This is one way for administrators to encourage board members to become involved. They disseminate the information we need, encourage board members to ask questions, engage in activities, and help guide us —not lead, but guide—us to be better board members.

Not all board members will become equally involved. Some do not have as much time, or, frankly, the commitment to do so. However, all have the opportunity to find out what is going on in the institution. If the administration does not keep its board informed and a serious problem develops, then that same administration should not expect the board to back them without question. The spoon-fed trustee in time of trial and tributation will not be capable of being a strong board member. In all probability he will fold under the stress of adverse opinion and public pressure.

EMPHASIS ON LEARNING

It is a fact that trustees spend far too much time on the building program and too little on the learning processes within the institution. If we spent as much time on learning as on building, our institutions would be much stronger.

We tend to leave curriculum matters entirely up to the educators. I am not an educator, nor an administrator, yet if I really wish to understand both functions, and pass judgment on such matters, then I must become knowledgeable about those things — I must become involved. Otherwise, in no way can I be the kind of trustee who has the expertise required to help my institution.

If there is a single recommendation that I would have for the new trustee, or for all trustees, it would be: travel. Not thousands of miles, necessarily, but away from his own district. See other institutions. Observe. Compare. It is impossible to evaluate one's own institution from within. It's like the old feudal castle with surrounding moat. If I don't allow any new ideas to come in, how do I know whether mine is

the best castle? How does the trustee determine whether he has the best administration?

He must sally forth into the world and talk to others, find out what they are doing, what kinds of problems they have, and how they are being solved. The traveler will quickly learn that classrooms suddenly are just classrooms, a gymnasium is a gymnasium, a science lab a science lab. But, as he sees, talks to, and listens to *people*—students, faculty, classified personnel, presidents—he immediately gains a yardstick, a comparison with the philosophies of his own institution.

At times I have been extremely critical of my fellow trustees—not only those at my own institution, but of others too. I have also been the recipient of criticism. Recently, a new trustee at my own institution took me to task. He told me I was being unfair, had no right to expect the degree of involvement that I expected from myself. He claimed that he could bring from his business the expertise necessary. It was irrelevant for him to have outside involvement.

I replied that I could not see that a trustee, even one as brilliant and financially successful as he, could make valid judgments of our institution if he had no measuring stick by which to judge it. I believe that if a man (or woman) is successful in business he or she is not necessarily a good trustee ipso facto. To become successful in business, one must work for it. To become a good trustee in education requires work.

NEGOTIATIONS AND THE BOARD

He who accepts the role of trustee today very often finds himself captive in weeks-long negotiating sessions involving the faculty or other personnel. The average businessman or housewife-turned trustee finds the negotiations procedure an extremely frustrating experience. Because of these harrowing experiences, school boards are losing many good people who declare they will not stand for reelection or reappointment because they simply could not endure the experience again.

I feel very strongly that trustees should not be directly involved in negotiations. Most trustees do not have the time that is required for these matters, they are not negotiators, and, most important, the trustee

as a decision-maker, dealing in negotiations, cannot divorce himself from the decision-making process.

Neither do I feel that the president of my institution should be involved in negotiating. His talents are better used in other situations. At my institution there is a board policy that neither a trustee nor the president shall meet in face-to-face negotiations. Rather, two groups meet: a negotiating team for the administrative side who are non-decision makers and the same for faculty or classified. It would seem incongruous to have decision-makers on one side and nondecision-makers on the other trying to reach viable conclusions. Up to this point our system has worked well.

This policy did not evolve overnight. Conversely, it was the result of a series of studies by our trustees who attended symposiums, lectures, and studies away from our institution from California to Illinois. It required a great deal of time, but gained unanimous board consent. Its success as a workable policy is due, I am sure, to the fact that it became a learning experience with the end result of involvement.

To sum up, I would say that the role of trustee, though little noted and little appreciated by the world around us, is a fascinating and tremendously satisfying one. The trustee has the opportunity to share responsibility for the direction that society takes. He shares the responsibility for that which has occurred about us more than any other group of "politicians" that we have in our form of government today. Education has always been behind progress. Without it, and the methods by which we have taught our young people through the generations, we could not have attained the type of society or kind of progress that we have today.

Jeanne Goddard

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY: ANOTHER VIEW

Does the average public community or junior college trustee understand his role and responsibilities? Much has been written about this subject, usually by educators who relate their messages to the four-year institutions of higher learning. This chapter is written by a trustee of a community college for trustees of community or junior colleges.

A trustee of a public community or junior college can play an exciting and challenging role in this area of education if she or he understands her role and assumes the responsibilities of the office, whose authority is granted by state legislatures.

One of the roles a trustee must play is that of a politician. Depending upon state laws, trustees are either elected or appointed. Elected trustees are chosen by the people and appointed trustees are usually selected by a patronage committee for appointment by the governor. Therefore, trustees must be in tune with the people and the political figures in office. Trustees must be involved with politics locally and at the state level. Trustees must know their legislators at all levels if they want to have impact on legislation for the institutions. For too long trustees have, by default, forced educators to carry the load for legislation. Trustees do have political clout. They face the same electorate the legislators do, and the legislators listen to the representatives of the people.

FINGER ON THE PULSE

Another major role the trustees must play is that of a public relations officer. The trustee has her finger on the pulse of the community as well as on the college family. Trustees must know the needs of the college. They must be able to communicate these needs to the legislators, the press, and the community. An effective way to inform everybody is to invite the citizens, the press, and the legislators for social visits to the campus to talk with the staff and the students. Always inform the presi-

dent of any visit on campus. These visits are for information, not for snooping.

Trustees have serious responsibilities. They have power of management which they usually delegate to the president and his administrative staff. The board of trustees is a policy-making body. Trustees are responsible for the actions of the president and must be vigilant to make sure that he manages and operates the institution within the framework of the policies.

Not enough can be said about policies. They must be written and constantly reviewed and up-dated. Policies should be written before the fact. Too often, boards of trustees adopt a policy after a problem has arisen. Documented policies are the surest safeguard against hasty judgments and law suits.

The major responsibility of the board of trustees is the selection of a president. A president can make or break the institution. The trustees hold the president accountable to them. A president of a community or junior college must have a different philosophy from that of presidents of other institutions of higher learning. The president must be committed to the "peoples" college concept of a comprehensive institution—which includes the three areas of programming—the academic, the continuing education, and the vocational-occupational-career.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Boards of trustees have responsibility for establishing goals and objectives for their institutions. Usually the staff develops the guidelines for the goals and objectives. However, an effective trustee will have some input. Once goals and objectives are established, the trustees have responsibility to evaluate the performance of the institution. Trustees should ask for reports, answering such questions as: How employable are graduated students? How are we servicing the community? How well are the transfer students performing in other institutions? Such reports made at board meetings by various elements of the college family are effective.

Trustees must understand the fine line between policy making and administration. Personnel can create the greatest number of problems. Despite crank calls, petitions, letters, and pleas a trustee must not get involved. Personnel matters are the domain of the president.

Trustees have responsibility to become knowledgeable about the changes and trends in education. Clark Kerr of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education recently stated that the golden ages of the sixties are over for our institutions and the seventies promise a new ball game. The "new" student and the "new" curriculum mean there must be new priorities. Trustees must adjust their thinking to the emphasis on community and career programming. Too, trustees must place priority on staff development. It is an economic investment for the future.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees must know their legal responsibilities. A trustee does not have the legal authority to act as an individual, nor to speak for the board, in any contact with the administration and staff of the institution, the citizens, or the press and other news media. Trustees act officially as a unit at open public board meetings. A trustee may speak for the board when designated to do so by the board. A lone participant who confers and promises, not only acts illegally, but also creates serious problems. In line with this observation, it is not wise to have a standing committee structure of the board. Too often standing committees become the voice of the board when there has been no board action. Ad hoc committees serve very useful purposes. They are usually short lived.

Trustees have the legal responsibility of functioning according to state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. It is necessary to have competent legal counsel versed in school law. With the many ramifications of collective bargaining, for instance, it behooves trustees to stay out of personal involvement and to rely on legal advice. Trustees must be knowledgeable and informed, but should rely on the expert for advice.

Fiscal responsibility of trustees varies from state to state. Some trustees have taxing authority and others do not. Despite how the funds are derived to operate the institution, the trustees are held accountable to the people and the legislatures. Support comes when it can be shown that money is wisely spent and when the products are successful and employable.

Trustees are often in a quandry on what to do and how to find out all they are supposed to know. Presidents are most helpful. State departments of education provide orientation seminars, and trustees help each other. From personal observation, I find that trustees in many cases learn

like Topsy. However, there are trustee organizations at the state and national levels whose reasons for existence are to serve the trustee and help train him for boardsmanship. Too, these organizations provide information regarding legislation which will affect all institutions. By being knowledgeable and by joining forces, the trustees united can have tremendous impact on legislation.

Trustees are usually very busy people who are committed to making a living for their families. They usually serve at no salary and assume a civic role with great legal and fiscal responsibility. I believe a trustee should know what is involved with the position before accepting the challenge. He or she should realize that time is needed to function effectively —not only time for board meetings, but time for state and national meetings, and time to meet with the public, the staff and students of the college, and the legislators. A trustee who takes the time will be a performer with the rewarding experience of being part of the "people's college."

Catherine R. Perkins

EDUCATION OF THE TRUSTEE

There are many reasons why individuals seek election to boards of trustees of community colleges. Some are moved by public spirit to serve, some are urged by other trustees. Faculty or student groups may sponsor representatives. The individual himself may have an "axe to grind," such as the lowering of taxes or the firing of the president. Some see trusteeship as one of the rungs on the ladder of greater political aspiration at the local, state, or even the national scene. Some foresee prestige of one sort or another.

Whatever the reason for seeking election, the trustee may soon discover that not every student who enters a community college learns as much as a newly elected trustee can. His or her own level of formal education is relatively unimportant. One of the finest trustees our college ever had used his high school education to the greatest advantage and constantly improved his knowledge of community college governance by reading and observation. His excellent business sense more than compensated for his lack of "higher" education.

Because of the diverse backgrounds of trustees, they learn much from one another. A farmer's knowledge of seeding and planting college grounds is equally as useful as the expertise of an insurance broker who can evaluate not only the various kinds of insurance that a college needs for both property and personnel, but also the reliability of quoted rate and the like. A homemaker can share considerable experience with fabrics, finishes, furnishings, and many other details useful in the college environment. And her time is often more flexible than that of the men or career women.

A banker's information about investments, anticipation warrants, and seasonal trends that influence the sale or purchase of bonds is as important as a businessman's experience with labor contracts or his general business acumen. Add all of these to a medical man's sense of the needs of the in-

stitution and community in all the nursing and paramedical fields, and we have sources of information that would otherwise require endless and painstaking reading and research for each of the other trustees to acquire.

Regardless of previous experience of the trustee on public or private board, he will find that many facets of the community college are unique. In the first year of service, especially if it is a newly organized college, he may come face to face with site selection, land purchase, choosing a president or chief administrator, developing a temporary budget, selecting an architect, promoting a referendum for building bonds, and almost continuous contacts with whatever regulatory boards and commissions his state has to oversee community college development.

If a trustee becomes elected to an ongoing board, he or she has just as many things to learn but of a slightly different nature. The architects may be on board before the newly appointed administrator can leave his previous commitment. Then, the trustee finds himself involved with schematic drawings, working drawings, final drawings, general contractors, sub-contractor, local contractors, change orders, insurance decisions, temporary facilities, chauvinism between local communities that are now a part of the college district, but who have never before cooperated to do anything—an endless list.

COMPLEX LESSONS

If the college has been operating for a few years, the lessons to be learned by a new trustee, even though in a different sequence, are just as complex. A second president may not be as eager to solve the problems of an ongoing institution as the first one was to begin with a clean slate. By now the faculty is seeking the acceptance of some group as their exclusive bargaining agent, or the board has previously approved election for such a choice, and extension of power within the institution by this group is an annual endeavor. A trustee who has been a homemaker, farmer, insurance agent, dentist, doctor, attorney, or in any business not directly concerned with organized labor has more than a little to learn about the negotiating process and its ultimate ramifications.

Some colleges are besieged by student groups searching for implementation of their ideals and ideas concerning activities, curricula, presidential selection, teacher evaluation, and even board membership. (Illinois now has legislation requiring each college board to seat a non-voting stu-

dent member.) It takes only a few years of operation for friction to develop between various deans, department heads, division chairmen, and the faculty groups themselves—notably between the traditionally academic corps and those of the growing technical and occupational fields. It is very difficult to find a common denominator for faculty load, class size, and faculty evaluation in such diverse areas. All of these situations are definitely educational to a trustee if he will but pursue further information about each.

In no way are all the lessons colored by seemingly negative factors. Very much is learned by a trustee in dealing with a very progressive, optimistic president. Individual faculty often present new concepts for innovative courses or ways for presenting traditional courses. The ideas that can be espoused for community service programs expand the minds of experienced as well as new trustees.

If time spent at board meetings is kept to the minimum needed, that savings can be used to provide opportunity for learning more about the colleges. Various departments may be invited to describe for the board how their programs are carried on and what they have planned for the future. Tours of some of the activity areas in the college are invaluable. How better can you understand the function of the learning resources center, and why "library" no longer describes it, than to see the retrieval system and the audio-tutorial equipment, and all the other audiovisual facilities, in addition to the expected thousands of books. Even the best chosen words can never picture the behemoth that awaits your visit to the computer center and all its adjuncts. Only then can a glimmer be seen of the possibilities for its utility in the many phases of the college, educational as well as operational.

Not all trustee education is academic; how much better you understand the need for athletic equipment and stage lighting if you've visited the athletic and drama departments. You will find out why a wrestling pad cover is needed and why transfer drama students are handicapped if they haven't experienced console-controlled lighting.

We must not assume that a new trustee stands alone in his need to accumulate information. Some individuals go on year after year, learning very little more about the community college world than when they came into it. It is a real challenge to overcome this kind of indifference.

UNDERSTANDING MONEY PROBLEMS

To this point, operating budget development has barely been mentioned. Whether it is large or modest, the demands on every community college budget invariably exceed the limitations and constraints of resources. Inability to increase local tax receipts by successful referenda has left many colleges with a choice between retrenchment and increased tuition charges, or both. Cost-of-living increases for staff alone have caused curtailment of desirable equipment purchases and delays in starting many needed programs that are often costly in the initial stages. Many may always be, such as nursing, X-ray technology, dental technology, and most of the allied health programs that are part of every community college — a real trustee dilemma!

In reality most of the above situations that seem to require an unusual expertise from a trustee can rightly be said to be the responsibility of the chief administrator, dean of business, dean of faculty, dean of student services, other administrative personnel, or the board attorney. It is true that these are for the most part administrative areas in which a trustee should not interfere. It is not his job to run the college. However, inasmuch as all the ultimate decisions or the approval of recommendations are the trustees' responsibility, they must have some viable knowledge in order to make intelligent decisions. The wife of a wealthy man may not have to do the many household tasks her less fortunate counterparts do, but her home will operate much more smoothly if she has some idea of what the tasks are and how they should be properly done. No less is true for the trustee of a community college.

Where does a trustee get this kind of information? It may be had at the local, regional, state, or national levels.

Locally, a trustee can learn much of the workings of his college if he will read, read, read! Board reports of prior actions can bring him in tune with what has previously transpired. He may save himself the red face of asking why the board does not deposit money in local banks as well as in the local trust and savings companies, when in fact they regularly do. Or why the board has not tried to annex some outlying territory at a time when the state is encouraging annexation, when actually much time and detailed effort has been spent in pursuing that very possibility. He learns that annexation is like a marriage — both parties have to be willing.

An alert administrator can do much to assist a new trustee by spending some time discussing the philosophy and goals of the college and encouraging the individual to ask questions.

Locally a trustee can learn the most by prompt and regular attendance at all meetings so that he hears all that has been discussed and the reasons for action taken then or later. Anything less is a disservice to the college and the electorate that afforded him the opportunity.

THE ILLINOIS PICTURE

In Illinois, where I have gained my experience, learning opportunities at the regional level are tied rather closely to the state. A very active organization of community college trustees, state-wide, is divided into regions, comprised of four or five colleges (depending on their geographical location). It is in the regional meetings, most of which are bi-monthly, that trustees have an opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss mutual problems, and actively participate in workshops and programs that trustees themselves ask for and for which they most generally provide the expertise. One of the best workshops successfully tackled professional negotiations. It was repeated in different regions of the state. In some colleges, trustees actively participate across the table in negotiations and find it very time consuming. In other colleges, an administrative officer, not the president, performs this function. Following soon after elections, orientation for trustees has been conducted, some in regions, some in local colleges. At the state level, these regional meetings are coordinated but not structured, mostly providing suggestions for programs or participants.

At the state level, the organization is carried on by directors, one appointed by each college, who hold monthly meetings with an executive secretary and small staff to assist the colleges in any projects or problems that relate to the state board or any of the agencies and commissions through which the colleges' programs are funded, approved, or licensed.

Much activity at the state level is legislative — studying proposed legislation, drafting legislation, supplying material and information to legislators for or against proposed bills. Many changes are needed, and some contemplated, that affect colleges. Some proposed legislation may be politically expedient but would produce economic chaos. A bill popular

with legislators would freeze taxes for two years at current levels. This would penalize any college that annexed a sizeable area with many potential students and no way to get additional taxes from the new or existing area to meet increased staff or other costs. It is at the state level that the regional groups are encouraged to meet once a year, or even more often, with legislators from their own regions to discuss college programs and to generally inform them about community colleges. This is a continuing process because new members are regularly being elected to the legislature — some years in rather large percentages.

During the time the legislature is in session, contact is maintained with sponsors of all bills affecting colleges, either through the legislative consultants, executive secretary, or individual trustees or all three. The state organization supplies continuous reports to all the colleges on the progress of all such bills.

At the state level, there is cooperation and interaction with a Council of Presidents, one from each college. Both the council and the trustees association act, by invitation, in an advisory role to the state board. In addition to the legislative bulletins sent regularly to the colleges, each trustee receives a monthly newsletter, which contains both news and information from the state level and about the other colleges. Besides these structured means, many opportunities are afforded for informal discussion and exchange of ideas among all the colleges at these monthly director's meetings. A trustee can learn as much as he is willing to at the regional and state levels.

At the national level, the most ready source of information for a trustee is the *Community and Junior College Journal.* Its greatest value is probably to point to trends in community college education across the country. Many ideas and practices from other states can be used in our own. Geographical and industrial variations make some plans for buildings and programs more feasible for some areas that for others. The same factors must be considered when making comparative cost studies of programs and operating expenses for diverse areas of the country. There is much variation in the needs and expectations. Other information at the national level for trustees has to do with federal legislation that affects their programs and equipment, assistance with capital funding and revenue sharing (if it should eventually reach the colleges). Acceptance of community col-

leges as fundable to veterans who could not or would not leave their homes and families for another campus made college possible for many.

An educational opportunity at the national level is in the collection and dissemination of many kinds of data and useful information. Although not necessarily a part of their education, most trustees would like to see wider acceptance and promotion of the community colleges across the nation as the training centers for all kinds of manpower development. They are equipped or could easily be, with staff, programs, and knowledge of area needs and conditions. This seems to be an extraordinary opportunity for the trainees and the colleges that has not been clearly seen. So while the most immediately useful information will come every day to the community college trustees at their local and state levels, input at the national level is important to their general knowledge of education and of community college operation. National meetings for trustees are planned to provide the participants with as many oportunities as possible to share with other trustees ideas, experiences, and even solutions to problems they may not yet have.

So whether at the national, state, or local level, trustees learn from other trustees. Upon being newly elected, they soon learn that there may be some sacrifices to be made. Effective trusteeship often interferes with golf, bridge, family activities, and on occasion even with job responsibilities. So being a trustee requires the approval and support of one's family as well as of his boss or partner. A seasoned trustee will testify there are not instant trustees, but under the fire of responsibility they move from amateurism to professionalism and to service that is both useful and rewarding.

Lilla E. Engdahl

LIAISON WITH THE COMMUNITY: A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRUSTEE

One of the responsibilities of the community college trustee is that of serving as a liaison between the college and the people of the community in which it is located. If the assumption is valid that a community college exists to serve the community, the assumption may also be made that a trustee shares the responsibility to help his or her college carry out this task. As a trustee, the individual represents the people of a specific area. In the representative form of government, the representative must determine what the constituents want of him.

He must have some means of communication with the people in his area. The trustee can serve as a member of the college speaker's bureau. He should be involved in the community, striving to help people in the community to accept the college as an integral part of the whole, to feel responsible for the welfare of the college during routine educational activities as well as during crises.

Whether a trustee is elected or appointed is not important. The important aspect is that he *is* a trustee who was selected to represent the other citizens of the area in the important business of governing the college. He is the first link of communication between the college and the constituents of the college. In his attempt to represent the citizens he must know and understand their desires. Most trustees represent far more individuals than any one person can communicate with personally.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNIQUES

Various techniques to facilitate communication have been tried. The success of any technique depends on the community, the personalities involved, and other factors.

The "town meeting", an open meeting at a public building to which citizens are invited through news media, has proven somewhat successful. The number of persons attending such meetings usually is a very small

percentage of the total population. However, for those who are seriously interested, it does provide an opportunity for exchange of ideas and concerns. It does provide the trustees and other officials of the college with a sounding board of the community. One limitation obviously is that only the more vocal and active members of any community would appear at such a public meeting. This would also be a criticism of the "open house" some colleges hold each quarter or each semester. At these affairs, the opportunity for two-way conversation is limited but perhaps worthwhile for the added exposure.

A third technique is that of the formation of a general citizens' advisory committee to the trustee, patterned after the craft advisory committee, but much broader in scope. Such committees, composed of 20 to 30 members, expand the number of persons actively committed to serving as liaison with the community from five or more trustees to four or five times that number. At regularly scheduled meetings, the advisory committee members are briefed about activities of the college. In turn, they are able to better inform their community contacts about the college. In addition, they can provide feedback from the community to the trustees. No technique is exclusively satisfactory. As thought is given to forming better liaison between the community and the college, other means of communication can be developed. The trustee owes it to his community to do his best to understand and relate the desires and needs of his constituents to the college.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

A trustee is a front line member of the public relations team, either officially or unofficially. Each trustee should serve directly or indirectly with the college speaker's bureau. Addressing a civic organization provides opportunity for give and take — questions and answers — as well as the occasion for the final delivery of information. The informal discussion generated by the presence of a college speaker can yield valuable information on community attitudes toward the college. The trustee should be recognized by his neighbors, by his co-workers, by other members of his civic and social organizations, as a trustee of the college. He should encourage support of the college by the example of service to the college that he provides. He should take advantage of every opportunity to interpret

the college to people he meets, and to learn from them what they need to know about the college.

As a trustee, the individual has an obligation to know his community. This means he should have a feel for the human need as well as the political forces at work. He should know the human service agencies where such needs are recognized and served. The service agencies should, in turn, know him and, through him, of the college and what it offers. Statistics are often more easily obtained than an understanding of the concerns for people. The personal touch is necessary in evaluating and interpreting the needs of people, and special effort must be exerted to uncover those needs. Co-operation between community human service agencies and the community college help both to better serve people.

THE COLLEGE IS THEIRS

If the word "community" in community college is to be meaningful, the community must feel the college is theirs. The people need to be involved with the college on an on-going basis. They need to participate in planning as well as review. They need to share in concern for the welfare of the college continually, not just at the time of a bond election. For example, lack of continuing involvement may lead to misjudgment about whether there is support for the direction the college is moving. In some cases this has been resoundingly and emphatically stated by defeat of bond elections at the polls on both public school and college levels. For those colleges depending on state support, a parallel can be drawn. Legislators and constituents of legislators can and should share in responsibility for the welfare of the college. There should be a continuing sharing, not sought only at time of crisis, (especially financial).

Liaison with the community is a responsibility of the trustee of a community college. If the college is to serve the community, and if it is to be a part of that community, it must be recognized as being responsive to the needs of the people. The trustee as a representative of those same people must take major responsibility for communication with them. He must be in the forefront, reminding the people that the community college is what they, through his representation, determine it will be.

L. E. Pucher

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE BOARD: THE HOLDING EXPERIENCE

No public educational institution, it may be said with a degree of certainty, is able to obtain all the money it wants or needs from its money suppliers. Some institutions, however, enjoy greater financial support than do others simply because of their attiudes in approaching local government for funds. Holding Technical Institute is one of these institutions.

Holding Tech is a state and local tax-supported, post secondary educational institution under the control of a twelve-man board of trustees. It is one of 57 institutions within the North Carolina Community College system.

In operation since 1963, the institute offers 29 certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs to area adults. Full time enrollment is approximately 1,200 with an additional 2,000-2,500 students enrolled in extension programs, general and basic adult courses, and other special areas of education and training.

Since its inception, Holding Tech has adhered to the philosophy of the State Board of Education that, "The doors of the institutions in the North Carolina system of community colleges must never be closed to anyone of suitable age who can learn what they teach. We must take the people where they are and carry them as far as they can go within the assigned function of the system." In keeping with this philosophy, the institute is a comprehensive, "open door" institution which serves persons from all walks of life. Located in the southern tip of Wake County, Holding Tech provides low-cost instruction, ranging from literary training through two years of post-high school vocational and technical education and training.

On December 3, 1970, the institute was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. On July 18, 1972, six of the institute's seven engineering technology curriculums were accredited by the Engineer's Council for Professional Development (ECPD).

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

The board long ago adopted the attitude that Holding Tech is a vital part of the community and that the community has no choice but to adequately support it! We know that such an attitude, if projected negatively to local government officials, could run the school aground. So, for this reason we, as trustees, promote the fact with local government and other officials that Holding is a community institution, spawned and nurtured by the community, with no greater ambition than to serve its needs.

Fortunately, while Holding is a very young institution, it has a president who knows how to communicate. Very clear lines of communication have been established between the board and the administration. (Let it be understood, however, that the president has total responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the institute. The trustees are very careful not to inject themselves into the job for which the president was employed.)

This has had substantial impact on the ability of the board to communicate intelligently with county government. Board members, as a result of information supplied by the president, have been able to deliver data to the county officials on the nature of the institute's influence in the community. They can talk with authority on the number of citizens who have economically upgraded themselves as a result of attendance in the day or night time curricula or discuss any subject pertaining to services offered to, or requested by, the community. The president, on the other hand, based on data supplied by the trustees, can speak to the county officials in terms of the community's industrial and individual citizen reactions to the quality and quantity of services the institution offers. This two-way approach, always carefully coordinated, has yet to fail the board and the institute.

KNOWING COUNTY OFFICIALS

Another factor which has worked to advantage is that the trustees have made it a point to know the county officials. They know something of their personalities as well as the history of how they manage local government. They know, for example, that the chairman of the board of county commissioners, is a young, successful attorney who knows how to probe as well as to spend wisely. It is known that the commissioners mean business — good business. Holding's board attempts to react to them in the same

manner. Care is taken to avoid asking for anything not needed, to present a total justification for those things that are required.

There are a number of very strong competitors for the available dollars in the community, and many of them have suffered because they approached the commissioners in an unsatisfactory way. As a result of going before them with homework done, the Holding board has been able to support the claim that the taxpayer is getting maximum benefits from the dollars he spends.

A KNOWING BOARD

The heterogeneousness of the Holding board (with representation from law, medicine, public school, industry, and business) is not dissimilar from the county commission, or any assembly of public officials. Ways of thinking and interests of both groups are not divergent. Therefore, there is empathy on both sides about respective tasks. Expressed support — both formal and informal — at the appropriate time, leaves a lasting impression.

In addition to our collective and individual support and expressions of opinion, the board attempts to function as a sounding board of sorts, advising the county commissioners of the community's reactions to issues as observed. They value members' observations and interpretations and appreciate the interest and efforts to assist.

The political structure of our board does not go unnoticed by the commissioners. Chapter 115A of the General Statutes of North Carolina specifies that a board of trustees of a chartered technical institute or a community college be composed of twelve members, elected as follows: four by the county commissioners, four by the local public school administrative units, and four by the governor of the state.

The fact that the commissions elected four persons to Holding's board has some influence in dealings with them. This is not used as a wedge, but as a resource.

REPORTING INFORMALLY

Important people, more particularly public officials, are inundated with virtual reams of reports and position papers requiring urgent attention. There are not always enough hours in the day for the busy official to give proper attention to everything that lands on his desk. Because of this

awareness, Holding board members prefer to let county officials know the institute's needs and what is being done in an informal manner.

Business can be mixed with pleasure — at a breakfast or a luncheon — to get more accomplished. This is not to say that a proper share of formal reports are not filed. It is merely that we have learned that our formal reports are best received after they are discussed in a relaxed atmosphere. Thus the board attempts, three or four times a year, to meet with the county commissioners to eat and to talk, either at the institute or at a location convenient to them. An agenda, as such, is rarely prepared for these types of meetings. When a need is felt to emphasize a particular subject or function, key members of the staff, knowledgeable about the matters, are invited to attend.

INFORMAL RELATIONS

Breakfasts and luncheons are not the only means employed for disseminating information to the public officials. Twice a year — at graduation time and at Christmas — the president honors the faculty and administration at a social gathering. On these occasions the county commissioners, as well as other public officials, are extended special invitations. These gatherings provide an opportunity not only for the board and the president to make input, but also for the institute's faculty and administration to meet and talk with the community's leaders.

These kinds of affairs have reciprocal impact. The local politicians derive a more realistic appreciation for what Holding is doing by talking directly with the task performers (the faculty and administration), while the faculty and administration play a more direct role in furthering the cause of the institute. Faculty members or deans have often expressed appreciation to a commissioner or legislator for support of our efforts at the institute. Nothing is ever rehearsed, however; nor is there any trace of a political theme at the gathering. This sort of dialogue simply happens. It happens because of the calibre of the dedicated and able faculty.

The effect of the actions of the Holding board is an open relationship between the community leaders and the institute. By actively and aggressively exhibiting achievements and progress as well as present and future needs to local government officials, the board clearly demonstrates to them that the institute is a vital and growing part of the community, deserving

of financial support because of its important contributions. The generous level of financial support extended by the local governing body suggests that this approach is sound and effective. It is recommended to other institutions seeking to obtain increased financial support from a local governing body made up of intelligent, progressive, concerned members.

Nadine Haas

WHERE THE TWAIN MEETS

In the past, the relationship between board members and students has been a distinct division . . . almost naturally antagonistic. The board was the board, the student was the student, "and never the twain shall meet." Today, however, this concept is beginning to change.

Throughout our nation students are serving on various educational committees and boards. In July, 1973, student participation was further advanced when the Maryland State Legislature voted to nominate (for the first time in our country), a student "voting" member to the State Board for Community Colleges. Harford Community College, in Harford County, Maryland, was chosen to select the first student board member; and in October, 1973, I was contacted by Kenneth W. Oosting, president of Harford Community College, regarding my nomination.

Naturally, I was honored and accepted the appointment. Much thought was given to my future responsibilities, as I realized my position was unique due to the fact that no one had served in this capacity before me. It is always difficult to be the "first" at something, to set a precedent for those who follow.

ESTABLISHING RAPPORT

With feelings of curiosity, eagerness, and some apprehension, I embarked on my one-year term as a board member. Being unfamiliar with the board's functions and procedures, the learning process was gradual and active participation hesitant. I sincerely desired to be accepted as an interested adult, and the receptive and cordial attitudes of the members provided me with a firm foundation on which to build mutual respect.

It has been said that man's greatest fault lies in his inability to listen. I used listening as my tool for learning and discovered that it is indeed vital in establishing an understanding atmosphere and rapport. As I began to interject my own questions and comments, the members listened

and reacted to them, as I also tried to respond to their feelings. Once we began to exchange ideas freely, a bond had been formed between us, making it much easier to deliberate with honesty and openness.

AWARENESS OF RULES

A universal complaint characteristic of most students is the inability of those in authoritative positions to get things done NOW. I, too, often wondered why the construction of new buildings took so long to begin and why new courses could not be added to the curriculum immediately.

Serving on the board provided an excellent opportunity to observe the step-by-step procedures involved in creating innovations. Caught up in the issue of chargeback, I became exasperated when the Maryland State Legislature defeated a bill allowing for such a program. (Chargeback is a policy which, if enacted, will provide any resident of Maryland with the opportunity to enroll in any community or regional community college in the state in a program which is not offered in his political subdivision of residence. In these cases, the student shall pay the share of regular fees and charges for students, and the state shall pay to the political subdivision of the community college attended the share of the political subdivision of residence.) I understood more clearly why construction of a new library on my campus was being delayed and also became aware of the systematic procedure required to adopt new programs, approve financial allocations for new buildings, and establish new policies and guidelines through legislation.

Another new experience was combating "red tape." Despite the fact that an orderly method of operation is essential, I felt that some of the procedures and discussions were cumbersome and really delayed completion of projects and the enactment of policies.

REPRESENTING A CONSTITUENCY

As an official board member, I was responsible for carrying out the powers, duties, and functions as stated in the Statewide Master Plan for Community Colleges in Maryland. In order to do this effectively, I tried to encompass my personal views with those of the students attending community colleges throughout Maryland. This was not an easy task since I

did not have the opportunity to discuss at length pending issues with a great number of students.

My first attempts at forming a communications channel between myself and the students began when I sent a letter to each student government president in the beginning of my term. It was a letter of introduction, giving background information, and inviting them to share their thoughts on any subject with me. I realized, of course, that academic pressures and extra curricular activities would hinder responses, but at least it was a beginning.

Student government conventions were held in Maryland and nearby states, and by attending I had the opportunity to canvass students and discuss their problems. Some of the issues concerned chargeback, desegregation, increases in tuition, and broadening the acceptance of community college graduates by four-year universities and colleges. I returned from these meeting with new insights which enabled me to give more accurate opinions when the board convened.

LOOKING BACK

In retrospect, I ask — What was accomplished this term? . . . How valuable is student participation on a college board? . . . What was *my* contribution? . . .

The main accomplishment was the establishment of a board-student relationship, instead of the normal board-faculty or board-administrator relationship. Thus, the "education gap" closes a little more.

The student participation and vote is a valuable asset to the college board. It enables members to relate to one another and to bring about a better understanding of their conflicting ideas. It is important that people on all levels of education get to know one another as human beings, and not just as "the student", "the teacher", "the president", and "the board member."

As the end of my term approaches, I plan to send to each community college campus a newsletter relating the accomplishments and decisions rendered by the State Board of Community Colleges throughout this year. I hope to impress upon students the fact that the board does implement policies and approve proposals which affect them directly.

It is important for students and administrators to work together and present a united front to the community. In doing so, it is the responsibility of every participant to take a giant step forward in establishing this harmony.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

Robert J. Rimington has served as a member of the board of trustees of Highland Community College, Freeport, Ill., since the institution was organized more than six years ago. Currently chairman, he also served for 11 years on the local school board. Mr. Rimington is with the Farmers Home Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Sedley Stuart is a member of the board of trustees of Mt. Hood Community College, Gresham, Ore., with service of more than seven years' duration. A businessman, he has also been active in public school activities. He is currently serving on the board of directors of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

Chairman of the board of trustees of Daytona Beach Community College, Daytona Beach, Fla., Mrs. Jeanne Goddard has been involved in community college planning and development since 1957. She is a member of the Florida Community College Council, and a trustee of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach.

Recently retired but still maintaining enthusiasm for the community college role in community service is Mrs. Catherine R. Perkins. Mrs. Perkins was on the board of Sauk Valley Community College for nine years, serving as chairman for three years. She also was active in secondary school work and was a mover in the Illinois Association of Community College Trustees.

Leader in community college development in Colorado, Mrs. Lilla E. Engdahl was appointed to the Denver Area Council for Community Colleges in 1967 and is currently a member. She was active in the establishment of the Colorado Association of Community Junior Colleges, serving a third term as president. She is also a member of the board of directors of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

Leo E. Pucher, a retired industrialist, has served for ten years as chairman of the board of trustees of the W. W. Holding Technical Institute in Raleigh, N. C. Active in other community service work, Mr. Pucher is presently director of Capital Associated Industries in Raleigh.

Active in many areas of student life while at Harford Community College, Nadine Haas during 1973-74 served as a student member of the Maryland State Board for Community Colleges. Ms. Haas, who demonstrated her leadership qualities while still in high school, served in student government at the Bel Air, Maryland, college. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, national honorary fraternity, and is listed in *Who's Who in American Junior Colleges.*

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